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THE PALACE OF ODYSSEUS

SINCE the time of Didymus,¹ plans of the palace of Odysseus have been drawn by commentators on the *Odyssey* to illustrate the action of the poem. During the greater part of the nineteenth century these, with few exceptions,² were based on the supposed arrangement of the Greek house of historical times, with the women's apartments and the storerooms in the rear of the great hall. The uncovering of the ruins at Tiryns, however, led Dörpfeld in 1885,³ to believe that the home of Odysseus resembled rather the prehistoric palace, in fact, that the story of the return of Odysseus could have been enacted in a structure like that at Tiryns. This view has found much favor, especially in Germany. In England Jebb⁴ upheld the traditional theory against Dörpfeld, and showed from passages in the *Odyssey* that the women's quarters at Ithaca must have been more easily accessible from the megaron than could have been possible at Tiryns. His arguments convinced scholars like Hentze,⁵ Chipiez,⁶ and Seymour.⁷ But Professor J. L. Myres⁸ took issue with both Jebb and Dörpfeld, and placed the apartments of the women across the courtyard from the great hall, as they may have been situated at Mycenae. Finally, the late Mr. Guy Dickins,⁹ who fell in 1916 in the first Somme offensive, attempted in a certain sense to harmonize the traditional theory with the results of excavations on prehistoric sites. Because of the argument of Professor E. A. Gardner¹⁰ that

¹ Cf. Schenkl, *Die Homerische Palastbeschreibung* (1893), p. 7, and Eustathius. 1921, 53.

² Especially the plan of Hayman, *The Odyssey of Homer*, Vol. I (1866), Fig. 1, illustrating Appendix F. 2.

³ Schliemann's *Tiryns*, pp. 237 ff.

⁴ *J.H.S.* VII, 1886, pp. 170-189; cf. *Introduction to Homer*, pp. 175 ff.

⁵ *Odyssee*, a 333, Anhang.

⁶ Perrot-Chipiez, *Hist. de l'Art*, VII, Pl. I.

⁷ *Homeric Age*, pp. 189, 197. Professor van Leeuwen, *Commentationes Homericae*, p. 201, and Miss Stawell, *The Iliad of Homer*, p. 175, also place the apartments of Penelope in the rear of the megaron.

⁸ *J.H.S.* XX, 1900, pp. 128-150.

⁹ *J.H.S.* XXIII, 1903, pp. 325-334.

¹⁰ *J.H.S.* XXI, 1901, pp. 293-305.

in the historical Greek house the gynaeconitis was under the same roof with the andron (although not behind it), Dickins placed the apartments of Penelope near the front corner of the megaron, but suggested that the storerooms opened on a corridor running along the side of the great hall *on the analogy of the palace at Cnossus*. The problem of the palace of Odysseus, therefore, still awaits a satisfactory solution. The present paper offers new evidence for the location of the apartments of Penelope and for the relation between the megaron and the storerooms.

As a basis of the discussion we assume that Homer presents a consistent picture of the palace throughout the poem. We do not accept Noack's theory that the hyperoön is mentioned only in late (and inferior) passages, for this theory rests upon the hypothesis of a stratification of the poem which is not generally accepted, and, furthermore, is contradicted, as Dörpfeld has remarked,¹ by the existence of a stairway at Mycenae, not to speak of Cnossus and Phaestus. Nor do we find it necessary to suppose that Homer at any point in the poem thinks of an arrangement of the palace which conflicts with that which is found in other passages. The more carefully the Odyssey is studied, the more accurate in details does the poet prove to have been, and while it is true that he frequently introduces a feature merely for the sake of the moment, yet this is rarely out of harmony with the other parts of his tale. We also hold it to be probable that the poet was familiar with structures, or at least with the story of structures, which in essentials resembled the prehistoric palaces which have been discovered on the mainland of Greece, and belong to the end of the Aegean Age, and which differ alike from the historical Greek house and from the Cretan palace. How he could have known buildings which belonged to an era several centuries before his own time is hard to determine, but that he did is rendered likely by his knowledge of many other features of that civilization which the excavations have revealed. That these assumptions, on which our discussion rests, are open to objections is not to be denied, but in the interpretation of Homer as well as in archaeology the position of the pragmatist has this in its favor: it does not lead to more difficulties than it attempts to remove.

The palaces at Tiryns, Mycenae, and Gha (Figs. 1, 2, 3) are alike in the use of megaron with vestibule, which may be either

¹ *Ath. Mitt.* XXX, 1905, p. 281.

single or double, and of other rooms opening on corridors. They differ in the situation of the apartments of secondary importance with respect to the megaron. Hence it is not necessary to believe that the palace of Odysseus was arranged like that at Mycenae or that at Tiryns, unless such an arrangement suits the narrative better than any other. A structure so complex as a palace was in all probability a growth to meet the increasing needs of the family and the estate, and the size, shape, and especially the location of the subsidiary apartments must have depended

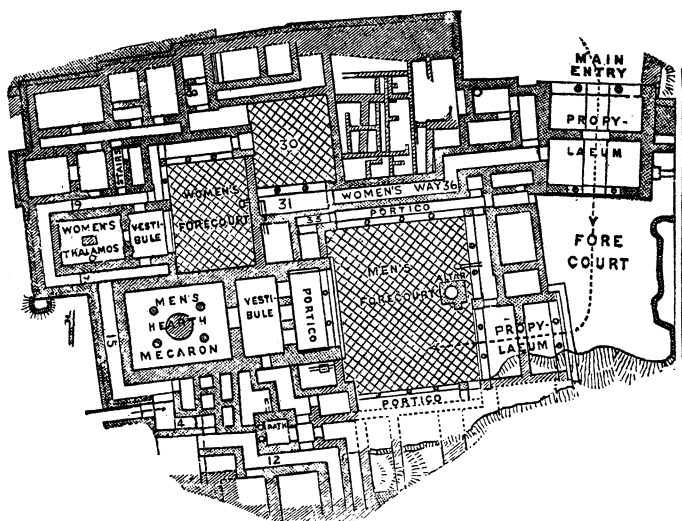


FIGURE 1.—THE PALACE AT TIRYNS.

not only on these needs but on the peculiarities of the site and on the individual taste of the proprietor. An example of such a growth is the New England farmhouse, in which to the nucleus of a rectangular structure with central hallway were added an "L" or "lean-to" and various other extensions in widely differing ways. Similarly the Homeric palace in its simplest form may well have consisted, as Noack has suggested,¹ of the megaron alone, in which the family lived and slept. There is no reason why a palace as simple as this should not have sufficed at Ithaca for Laertes and Anticleia so long as their two children were small. Let us suppose that this was the case, and then let us trace a few

¹ *Homerische Paläste*, pp. 45 ff.

of the steps in the expansion of the palace, noting especially the various apartments which in all probability were occupied from time to time by Penelope, from her coming to Ithaca until the return of Odysseus. It is not assumed that these conclusions admit of proof, but they help to present our problem with greater clearness.

When Odysseus grew to manhood he required a separate thalamos, perhaps like that of Telemachus, which was in the

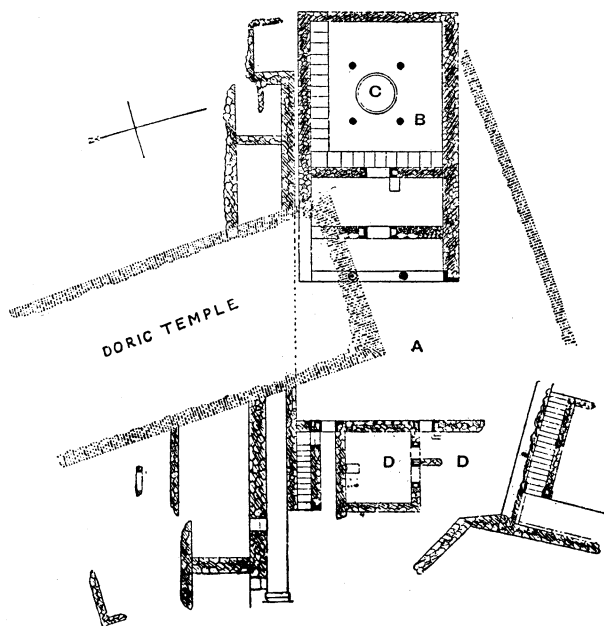


FIGURE 2.—THE PALACE AT MYCENAE.

courtyard (a 425). On his marriage with Penelope we are told that he built a chamber for himself and his bride, using the trunk of an olive tree in the construction of the nuptial couch (ψ 190–201). The poet gives no hint of the location of this marriage chamber, save that it was within the wall enclosing the palace (ψ 190). The most natural place for it would be in the courtyard: the apartments of Priam's twelve daughters and their husbands were thus situated, and as these chambers were "on the other side" (sc. of the courtyard) and "opposite to" the thalamoi of his fifty married sons, the latter, too, must have had

their dwellings in the αὐλή.¹ The increasing wealth of the family at Ithaca must have made it necessary to erect more storerooms, and to enlarge the quarters for the growing number of slaves. It is likely that Penelope continued to occupy the nuptial thalamos of Odysseus until Anticleia died and Laertes retired to his house in the fields, at least seven years before the return of Odysseus. Then she would naturally remove to that portion of the palace which was set apart for the master and mistress, which we

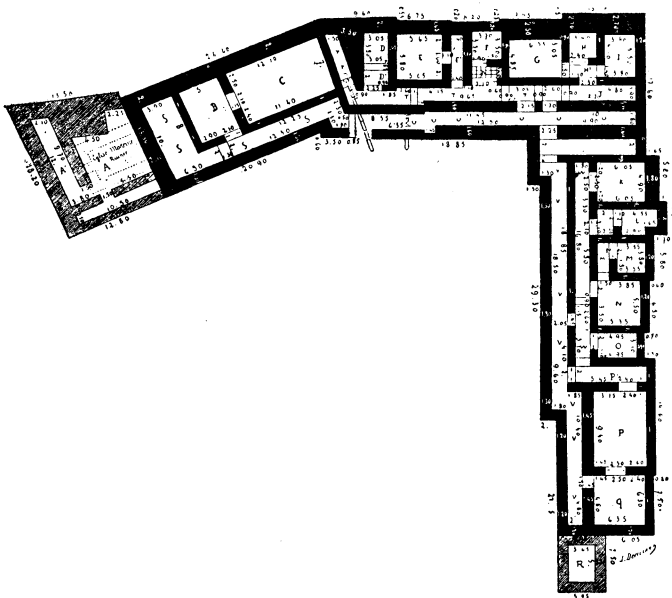


FIGURE 3.—THE PALACE AT GHA.

have assumed to be the great hall. The arrival of the Suitors, however, and their banquets in the hall, made it inconvenient, if not impossible, for her to sleep there any longer. Hence she must seek other quarters. The poet could not allow her to return to the thalamos of Odysseus, for the recognition scene in ψ made it necessary that this should have been unused for some years. So she took up her abode in an upper room which seems to have been

¹ Z 242-250. Ameis-Hentze give the most natural interpretation of the passage. Others, *e.g.*, Monro, take it differently, but Monro is puzzled to explain why the apartments of the sons of Priam were located differently from those of the daughters.

directly or approximately over the large room in which her women worked at the wool, carding and spinning, and doubtless weaving. Where were these apartments, or—to avoid begging the question—where were the apartments in which the queen is found at the return of Odysseus? Jebb answers, in the rear of the megaron; Dörpfeld, at the side, but some distance away; Myres, across the courtyard, and Dickins, at a front corner of the megaron. I believe the last is most likely to be correct.¹

I.

The location of the women's apartments, as Dörpfeld identifies them at Tiryns, is ill-adapted to the palace at Ithaca, for it places the queen too far from the great hall. Penelope from her upper room hears the words of the bard's song (α 328), and her sobbing seems to Odysseus, lying awake in the prodomos, to be near his head (ν 92–94). From the thalamos below she hears Telemachus sneeze in the megaron (ρ 541 f.), and while seated in front of her door she catches the words “of each man in the hall” (ν 387–389). These passages cannot apply to a structure like that at Tiryns, as a glance at the plan (Fig. 1) will show.

Jebb's plan (Fig. 4), although it has the force of tradition behind it, and is in essentials the one most widely accepted, is not supported by any archaeological evidence, and—what is much more to the point—it does not suit the action of the Odyssey. Jebb assumes as the basis of his theory that there was a door at the farther end of the megaron opening into the apartments of the women, and that the stone threshold (ρ 30, ν 258, ψ 88) belongs to this doorway. There are at least three very serious and apparently insurmountable obstacles to the acceptance of this view.

In the first place, it leads to a most unusual situation at the end of the twenty-first book. Odysseus, from his seat near the stone threshold, shoots an arrow through the axes (ϕ 420–423), and then is found separated from the great door-stone on which he leaps at χ 2, by the entire length of the hall. According to Jebb, he carries bow and quiver from one end of the hall to the other unnoticed by the poet and unhindered by the Suitors. This alone should render Jebb's view unacceptable—although it would be better to agree with him than with Andrew Lang, who

¹ I had come to a similar conclusion, on different grounds, when my attention was called by my friend Dr. Lacey D. Caskey to the article of Mr. Dickins.

in his translation of the *Odyssey* makes Odysseus shoot the Suitors from the threshold at the farther end of the hall.¹

But, secondly, Jebb's evidence for the location of this threshold is weak. Homer mentions two thresholds of the hall of Odysseus, one of ash, which we know to have been at the entrance in front (ρ 339), and the other of stone.

The latter is mentioned three times.

(1) At the banquet preceding the slaughter Telemachus seats Odysseus, who is disguised as a beggar, "beside the stone threshold" (ν 258). Jebb holds that this was "clearly at the upper end of the hall." But there is no direct evidence for this, and, as we have seen, the probabilities are against it.

(2) Just before the recognition scene (ψ 88) Penelope crosses the threshold of stone in entering the hall. We can draw no conclusions from this verse until we know the location of the queen's upper chamber, from which she came.

(3) The third passage, overlooked by Jebb, is conclusive against him. Telemachus, coming from the hut of Eumaeus, and before he has seen his mother, crosses the stone threshold (ρ 30), and finds Eurycleia spreading fleeces over the thrones, that is, she is in the great hall preparing it for the coming of the Suitors. Hence the stone threshold, as well as the threshold of ash, must be at the entrance to the megaron.

The existence of two thresholds in one doorway presents a difficulty which we must try to remove before going further with the discussion.

Several explanations are offered. According to the least satisfactory of these the poet is inconsistent and refers to the same



FIGURE 4.—THE HOMERIC PALACE: JEBB.

¹ Butcher and Lang, *Odyssey*, pp. 422 ff., note 18: 'The House of Odysseus.' Later, in his book *Homer and His Age* (1906), p. 211, he gives up this view, and seems to adopt that of Professor Myres.

threshold as now of ash and again of stone: This way out of the difficulty is both contrary to our premise and unnecessary, since two possible locations at the front of the megaron have been proposed for the two thresholds. The first is that of Reichel,¹ who places the threshold of stone between the megaron and the prodomos, and that of ash in the doorway which leads from prodomos into aithousa (Fig. 6, L). There are two objections to Reichel's suggestion. (1) After Odysseus has left the ashen threshold, and has passed around the hall, begging from the Suitors, he returns with full wallet to his seat on the threshold (ρ 466, ἀψ δ' ὄγ' ἐπ' οὐδὸν ἰὼν κάτ' ἄρ' ἔξετο), and from there addresses the Suitors. The threshold mentioned in this verse would naturally be the one on which he had been sitting, that is, the ashen threshold, and from there, if it is where Reichel puts it, he could not well speak to the Suitors. (2) The evidence is against the existence of a double vestibule in the palace of Odysseus. We are not told anywhere in the poem that the great hall of Odysseus had an aithousa.² In the palace of Menelaus prodomos and aithousa were identical: Helen orders her maids to prepare couches in the aithousa for Telemachus and Pisistratus (δ 297), and later we learn that the two princes slept in the prodomos (δ 302).³ Finally, the evidence offered by Joseph⁴ in favor of a double vestibule in the palace of the father of Phoenix (I, 472 ff.), rests on a misunderstanding of the passage. The situation is this: For nine days Phoenix has been kept a prisoner in the palace by being shut up in his thalamos (which, like that of Telemachus, was probably in the courtyard). His guards, we are told, kept watch by night, kindling two fires, one in the aithousa of the court (vs. 472) and the other in the prodomos, be-

¹ *Arch. Epigr. Mitth. aus Oesterreich-Ungarn*, XVIII, 1895, pp. 8 f.

² Two of Professor Myres' statements in his argument for a double vestibule (*J.H.S.* XX, pp. 144-145), viz., that prodomos and aithousa are occasionally mentioned together, and that the whole body of Suitors ate in the prodomos, must be due to an oversight. It is *πρόθυρον* which is linked with *αἴθουσα*, and that is quite a different thing from *πρόδομος*, and of course the Suitors dine only in the hall. Nor is it likely, as Myres holds, that the guests of the father of Eumaeus dined in the prodomos (ο 466, and the note of Ameis-Hentze). The poet tells us that the beakers and tables were in the prodomos, but the feast had ended sometime before, or else had not yet begun (cf. ο 468), and so the tables were not in the hall (cf. τ 61 f. cited by Ameis-Hentze, and Σ 376).

³ Professor Myres explains (*l.c.*) that prodomos is a larger and vaguer term, and includes both parts of the double vestibule. But this is hardly satisfactory.

⁴ *Die Paläste des Hom. Epos*, p. 31.

fore the door of the thalamos (vs. 473). On the tenth night he makes his escape in spite of the guards, by bursting open the door of his chamber and overleaping the encircling wall of the courtyard, that is, he forces his way through the guards at his door, and avoids those who were in the "aithousa of the court." Hence the latter is not immediately in front of the prodomos, but is in all likelihood the covered portico inside the gateway, as at Tiryns (Fig. 1) and in the palace of Odysseus (ϕ 390).¹ Therefore, while the argument *e silentio* is far from being conclusive, it seems probable that the hall of Odysseus, like the megara at Gha (Fig. 3, B, Q.) and at Hissarlik, had but a single forechamber. On this ground, too, we must reject Reichel's identification of the two thresholds. There remains the explanation offered by Professor Myres (*op. cit.*, 136-139): both the thresholds belonged to the same doorway. The sill of the door was of ash, as its jambs were of cypress (ρ 339 f.). Under the sill was the stone threshold, called also the great threshold (χ 2), a slightly elevated platform of stone, so large that on it could stand two wrangling beggars (σ 33), or four armed men (χ 115, 203). This theory harmonizes with the action of the Odyssey, and also aids in the interpretation of a difficult passage (χ 126 ff.), which we shall discuss later. Therefore, in spite of the lack of any parallel in the prehistoric palaces which have been discovered, we must accept it as the most probable.

We may now return to Jebb's plan of the palace, and consider the most serious objection to it. As Dörpfeld took for granted that in the smaller megaron at Tiryns he had found the gynaecoonitis, so Jebb assumed without argument that in the Homeric palace the "top of the hall" was at the end farthest from the door, as in mediaeval times and as at Oxford, for example, today. Against this view Professor Myres argued that the use of the phrases $\alpha\nu\acute{\alpha}$ $\delta\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha$ and $\kappa\alpha\tau\grave{\alpha}$ $\delta\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha$, "up the hall," "down the hall," in the Odyssey, shows that just the opposite is true, the "top of the hall" being near the entrance. These phrases, however, prove little more than that the poet thought of the main doorway

¹ This is the interpretation of Ameis-Hentze. Another occurs to me as possible. The guards of Phoenix slept $\acute{\alpha}\mu\phi'$ $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\omega}$ (I, 470). The preposition implies a position around, if not on two sides of the thalamos. May it not be that the $\alpha\theta\upsilon\sigma\sigma\alpha$ $\alpha\theta\lambda\eta\varsigma$ of vs. 472 was one of the porticoes which ran along the wall of the courtyard (cf. Fig. 1), that the thalamos stood in front of this, and that the purpose of the night-watch in the aithousa was to prevent the escape of the prisoner from his thalamos by means of a rear door or window?

as the point of departure, just as the Greeks thought of the sea-shore, or, to use the words of Professor Myres, the hall is regarded as a well, with its mouth at the entrance. They do not indicate that the position of honor, the "head of the hall," was not "at the bottom of the well," where Jebb places it. In fact, Professor Myres himself holds that the head of the hall was near the hearth, and therefore near the middle of the hall. But there is convincing evidence, which apparently has never been noticed, that in the scenes which are laid in the *megaron* the leaders are placed in the front portion. Since this has a direct bearing on the location of Penelope's apartments, we must consider it at some length.

We follow Jebb in picturing the 108 Suitors as seated in two rows at least, along the side walls of the hall. As evidence for this arrangement may be cited the palace of Alcinous, in which the king and his family sat by the hearth, and the nobles by either wall (ζ 305 ff., η 95 ff.). We note also that when Odysseus begged from the Suitors (ρ 366), he stretched out his hand in all directions. This implies at least a double row, which would be necessary on account of the numbers.¹ The poet tells us that the Suitors sat "on thrones and on *klismoi*." Very likely the former were placed against the wall, and the latter in front of these, for they were movable seats which could be brought in to accommodate additional guests. Now there is a passage which shows conclusively that Antinous, the leader of the Suitors, sat at the end of one of the rows, nearest the main doorway, and probably on the lefthand side. Telemachus bids the Beggar-Odysseus to beg from all the Suitors, and after the bard has finished his lay, Odysseus makes his round *from left to right* (ἐνδέξια, ρ 365), asking of each man, "as though he were a beggar from of old." When all the others have given him something and he is on the point of returning with full wallet to his seat on the threshold, he pauses by Antinous. The latter, therefore, sat nearest to the threshold of all the princes on the same side of the hall. No one can question that the threshold in question was at the front of the *megaron*. Hence we have fixed with certainty where Antinous sat when Odysseus arrived at the palace.²

¹ On this point cf. 'The Suitors of Penelope,' *Trans. Amer. Philol. Association*, XLIX, 1918.

² Whether Antinous sat on the left or the right side of the hall depends on the point of view from which the phrase "from left to right" is to be interpreted, that of Odysseus or of the Suitors. The latter seems more natural.

That his seat was the same on the following day is probable on general grounds, and is supported by the evidence. In the Contest of the Bow Antinous proposes that all shall try in turn, "from left to right (*ἐπιδέξια*), beginning where the wine is poured" (*φ* 141). The Suitors agreeing, the first to essay the contest is Leiodes, who occupied a throne (*φ* 166) beside the mixing-bowl (*φ* 145), and, the poet adds (vs. 146), "sat always farthest from the entrance" (*μυχολίτατος αἰεί*). His soft hands soon prove unequal to the task. Then the bow is warmed and greased, and the young men endeavor to bend it, but in vain. The bow has not yet reached the two leaders, Antinous and Eurymachus,¹ when the swineherd and the neatherd leave the hall, followed by Odysseus. When the three return, Eurymachus is trying the bow. He fails like the others. Then on the suggestion of Antinous, it is agreed to postpone the remaining trials until the following day. We must assume that only the Suitors on one side of the hall have taken their turn, with the exception of Antinous.² This places the leader where he sat on the previous evening, farthest from Leiodes, and nearest the door. Certain details of the slaughter which follows show this assumption to be correct. Antinous, nearest the threshold on which Odysseus stands (*χ* 2; cf. Fig. 7, A), is the first to receive an arrow, as he deserves. Eurymachus is next, and Leiodes, farthest from the door, is the last to be slain.

As the position of the two leaders of the Suitors is fixed near the "top of the hall," which Myres has shown to be the end towards the entrance, so we may with certainty place Telemachus near the hearth in the centre, but on the side facing the front, or at least seated so that he can see the door, for he catches the nod of Odysseus (*φ* 431), who has, however, secured his attention by addressing him directly. Near the hearth the family gathers, as

¹ *φ* 186, 'Αντίνοος δ' ἔρ' ἐπεῖχε καὶ Εὐρύμαχος θεοειδής. The meaning of ἐπεῖχε is disputed, some holding that it is to be rendered, "was holding to the task (of bending the bow)." But surely "was holding aloof" is the more natural interpretation, and this seems to be put beyond reasonable doubt by ἡδῆ (*φ* 245. [After the two slaves have returned to the hall, preceded by Odysseus] Εὐρύμαχος δ' ἡδῆ τόξον μετὰ χειρὶν ἐνώμα).

² Against this assumption that less than half of the Suitors had essayed to bend the bow may be urged the words of the shade of Amphimedon (*ω* 170 f.), "No one of us could string the mighty bow." He does not say specifically, however, that all had made the attempt, and if they had, there is little point to the words of Antinous (*φ* 268), "Tomorrow let us *finish* the contest," i.e., "Let me and the Suitors on the other side of the hall as far as Leiodes, who have not yet contested, have their turns."

we have seen, and here Odysseus sits after he has slain the Suitors and is again master of his palace (ψ 90 f.). It is necessary to place Telemachus here in order to explain his movements at the beginning of the slaughter (χ 89-94). After Antinous and Eurymachus have been slain, the poet tells us that Amphinomus, the Dulichian, draws his dagger and rushes towards the door, hoping to force Odysseus from his position there. But Telemachus was too quick for him, and *from behind him* brings him to earth by a blow of his spear.¹ Telemachus, therefore, must have been seated towards the centre of the hall rather than near his father. We may add that the seat to which Telemachus conducted Mentès-Athena (α 130), was also, as it seems, near the hearth, for here was the only throne, so far as we know, which would have been "apart from the Suitors" (α 132; see the latter part of note 1). Penelope, too, sits near the hearth in the evening, after the departure of the Suitors (τ 55); In the daytime, on the contrary, she sits by the door in the absence of the Suitors, and when they are present she does not enter the hall farther than the doorway.² The poet never tells us that the queen sat in the

¹ The only objection to this interpretation is a passage at the end of the Contest of the Bow (φ 431-434). At a nod from his father Telemachus girds on his sword and grasps his spear, (ἄγχι δ' ἄρ' αὐτοῦ παρ' θρόνον ἐστήκει κεκορυθμένος αἰθοπι χαλκῶ). "He stood beside his throne, near him (Odysseus), armed with gleaming bronze." This seems strange, for Odysseus was sitting close to the threshold, and there is no mention elsewhere of a throne near the doorway: Penelope sits on a *klismos* (ρ 96), and Telemachus and Theoclymenus (in order to be near her) also occupy *klismoi*, and not the thrones of host and honored guest. Furthermore, if Telemachus were standing near his father, it is hard to see how he could have struck Amphinomus *in the back*. So I am inclined to accept the emendation of Miss Stawell (*op. cit.*, p. 178, note 2), who reads *κεκορυθμένον*—a very slight change which she ably justifies. The lines quoted above now refer to the spear: "It was standing near him (Telemachus), tipped with gleaming bronze" (cf. χ 125, Δ 43). This emendation also removes the objection of certain critics who ask where Telemachus got his spear; he took it from the "well-polished spear-rack" (α 128), where it rested against a tall column (α 127), and the latter was near both the hearth and the throne occupied by the head of the family (cf. ζ 308).

² Professor Myres cannot be right in understanding *παρὰ σταθμὸν μεγάρου* (α 333, π 415, σ 209, φ 64) to refer to one of the columns near the hearth. The column (*κίων*) was round (cf. ψ 191, and the archaeological evidence); the *σταθμός* was "hewn to a line" (ρ 340 f.), that is, squared. The word *σταθμός* is used of a support eighteen times in the two poems; in two-thirds of these cases it must mean a door-post, and it need never refer to a column. Nor are *κίων* and *σταθμός* ever used interchangeably.

presence of her wooers, although she must have done so at least twice, while the gifts were being brought from the city (σ 291 ff.) and during the contest of the bow (ϕ 63-353). He will not give his hearers the impression that she ever shares in the company of the roystering princes, and therefore always pictures her as standing on the broad door-step which plays such a prominent part in the story. Since it is from this position that she converses with Telemachus and with the leaders of the Suitors, and since, as we have given reasons for believing, both the prince and these leaders are seated in the front part of the hall, we have an added and a conclusive reason for rejecting Jebb's location of the threshold, and consequently of the apartments of the women.

Nor is the situation proposed by Professor Myres, across the courtyard from the megaron (Fig. 2, D.), sufficiently free from objections to be acceptable. On general grounds we should expect the women's quarters to be more closely integrated with the main structure, as both Seymour and Dickins have remarked.¹ Furthermore, a palace arranged like that at Mycenae fails to meet the requirements of several passages in the *Odyssey*. In δ 679 Medon, while outside the courtyard, overhears the Suitors plotting to lie in ambush for Telemachus, and starts $\delta\iota\alpha\ \delta\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$ to tell the queen. Now the phrase $\delta\iota\alpha\ \delta\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha$ ($\delta\iota\alpha\ \delta\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$) elsewhere in the *Odyssey* implies passing through at least some portion of the main structure consisting of megaron and porch, in fact, $\delta\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha$ ($\delta\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$) always includes a part of this portion of the palace. If the herald had only to enter the outer gate and proceed directly to the door of Penelope's chamber, without approaching the main building, the use of the phrase is somewhat unnatural. Again, the courtyard at Ithaca must have been at least as large as that at Mycenae, if more than one hundred princes could engage in their sports before the door of the megaron, and at Mycenae it is about seventy feet from the megaron to the door of the building which Professor Myres takes as the queen's apartments. This is rather too far to permit the words spoken in the hall to be heard by Penelope. But the chief and decisive passage is ν 92 f: Odysseus, as he lies awake in the prodomos, hears Penelope (who is in her upper chamber) sobbing, and he thinks that she is standing near his head. Surely her bedchamber is nearer the porch of the palace than Professor Myres places it.

We may note in passing a plan of the Homeric palace drawn by

¹ *Homeric Age*, p. 197; *J.H.S.* XXIII, 1903, p. 328.

Dr. Walter Leaf¹ to illustrate the action of the Iliad (Fig. 5). This is based on a slight modification of Dörpfeld's theory,

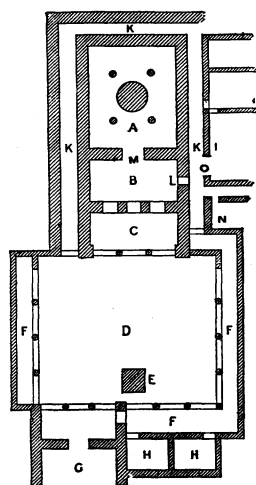


FIGURE 5.—THE HOMERIC PALACE: LEAF.

for it places the women's quarters and the other thalamoi at the side of the megaron, although not so far away. This plan is not open to any of the objections that have been urged against the theories of Dörpfeld, Jebb, or Myres. The apartments of Penelope (at I or N, Fig. 5) are of easy access to the door of the megaron (Fig. 5, M), and if we suppose there was a door at O, the queen might easily have overheard the words spoken within the hall, and her sobbing might have seemed very near to one who was in the prodomos. But Dr. Leaf's arrangement of the other thalamoi, especially the storerooms, and the direction in which he, with most other scholars, makes the *λαύρη* run (Fig. 5, K), interfere with

what seems to be the most reasonable solution of a famous crux of the Odyssey (χ 126 ff.), to which we now turn.

II.

At χ 125 the last arrow has been shot, Telemachus has brought from the armory spears, helmets, and shields for Odysseus and his three allies, and they have armed themselves and taken their stand upon the great door-stone. The poet now describes how the traitor Melanthius obtained arms for some of the Suitors, and how his treachery was discovered. The passage is so long that only the verses which are pertinent to the discussion of the palace will be quoted, the others being briefly summarized.

ὄρσοθύρη δέ τις ἔσκεν ἐνδμήτῳ ἐνὶ τοίχῳ,	126
ἀκρότατον δὲ παρ' οὐδὸν ἐυσταθέος μεγάροιο	127
ἦν ὁδὸς ἐς λαύρην, σανίδες δ' ἔχον εὖ ἀραρυῖαι.	128
τῇν 'Οδυσσεὺς φράζεσθαι ἀνώγει δῖον ὕφορβον	129

¹ *The Iliad*,² Vol. I, p. 588. I have added the letters M, N, O, and have placed a doorway at O.

έστεῶτ' ἄγχ' αὐτῆς· μία δ' οὔη γίγνεται ἐφορμή.	130
.....	
“ ἄγχι γὰρ αἰνῶς	136
αὐλῆς καλὰ θύρετρα, καὶ ἀργαλέον στόμα λαύρης·	137
καὶ χ' εἰς πάντας ἐρύκοι ἀνὴρ.”	138
.....	
ὥς εἰπὼν ἀνέβαινε Μελάνθιος αἰπόλος αἰγῶν	142
ἐς θαλάμους Ὀδυσῆος ἀνὰ ῥῶγας μεγάροιο.	143
.....	
νόησε δὲ δῖος ὕφορβός,	162
αἶψα δ' Ὀδυσσῆα προσεφώνεεν ἐγγὺς ἔοντα·	163
.....	
“ κείνος δὴ αὐτ' αἰδήλος ἀνὴρ, δν οἰόμεθ' αὐτοί,	165
ἔρχεται ἐς θάλαμον.”	166

“Now there was an *ὀρσοθύρη* [a door of some kind] in the well-built wall; and past the top of the threshold of the well-established hall ran a way that led into a corridor, and well-fitted doors barred it. This Odysseus bade the godlike swineheard to mind, standing close to it. An enemy would have but a single means of approach.” [Agelaus, who now leads the Suitors, suggests that someone go out by the *ὀρσοθύρη* (ἀν' ὀρσοθύρην ἀναβαίη) to the town for help. Melanthius replies that this is impossible.] “‘For the doors into the courtyard are terribly near, and the entrance to the corridor is hard to force. One man could hold it against a multitude.’ Thus speaking the goatherd Melanthius went out to the storerooms through the narrow passages leading from the hall.” [The goatherd brings twelve suits of armor. Odysseus sees the Suitors arming themselves, and says there must be treachery somewhere. Telemachus takes the blame because he had left open the door of the armory. Odysseus bids Eumaeus go and make fast the door, and see who the traitor is. Melanthius now went again for armor.] “And the godlike swineheard noticed him, and quickly said to Odysseus, *who was near him*, ‘There is the destructive man again, the one whom we suspected, going to the armory.’”

There are at least eight points in this passage on which commentators fail to agree. We shall discuss them in the order in which they occur. (1) The *ὀρσοθύρη*. The various explanations which have been proposed include the following: a postern

gate, as at Tiryns;¹ a side door in the prodomos;² a door in the middle of the side wall of the megaron, either at the top of a flight of stairs³ or of a ladder,⁴ or else more nearly on a level with the floor of the hall;⁵ a door in the side wall near the front,⁶ or, finally, a door in the rear of the megaron, probably in the side wall (Fig. 7).⁷ The last view finds the best support in the evidence from the *Odyssey*. Leiodes, as we have seen, always sat farthest from the entrance, and his throne was beside the mixing-bowl. The latter, therefore, was in the rear of the hall. He is likewise the last of the Suitors to be slain. We can determine approximately the position of Odysseus and his allies at the end of the massacre which concludes the spear-fight; they were some distance down the hall (χ 307), but had not reached the farther end, for Leiodes runs forward to clasp the knees of Odysseus (χ 310), and the latter kills him with the dagger which had fallen from the hand of the dying Agelaus, leader of the Suitors, and consequently in the front rank in their second and last onset (χ 293). After the death of Leiodes, the bard Phemius hesitates whether to go out by the orsothyre and take sanctuary on the altar of Zeus Herceius in the courtyard, or to throw himself at the feet of Odysseus and beg for mercy. He decides on the latter course, and lays down his lyre between a throne and the mixing-bowl (χ 330-341). Phemius is, therefore, standing at the farther end of the hall, and the orsothyre is also there, for otherwise either Odysseus or one of his allies would block an escape by this route. This interpretation agrees with the passage which we are discussing. The suggestion of Agelaus that someone go for reënforcements by way of the orsothyre is more intelligible if the latter is in the rear of the Suitors rather than near the terrible Odysseus and his supporters.

¹ Schenkl, *Die Homerische Palastbeschreibung*, p. 16. This requires the rejection of χ 333. Schenkl gives all the extant passages from ancient commentators which bear upon the points under discussion.

² Reichel, *Arch.-Epigr. Mitth. aus Oesterreich-Ungarn*, XVIII, 1895, pp. 6-12. His arguments are answered by Noack in *Strena Helbigiana*, pp. 215 ff.

³ Middleton, *J.H.S.* VII, 1886, p. 165, Fig. 4.

⁴ Gerlach, *Philologus*, XXX, 1870, p. 508 and Taf. II.

⁵ Dickins, *J.H.S.* XXIII, 1903, p. 326, Fig. 1; Holweerd, *Mnemosyne*, N.S. XV, 1887, p. 301.

⁶ Kammer, *Die Einheit der Odyssee*, p. 685, Professor Percy Gardner, *J.H.S.* III, 1883, p. 277, Chipiez, and Miss Stawell, in the works already referred to, and many others.

⁷ Hayman, Ameis-Hentze, and Professor Cauer, on χ 126; Jebb (Fig. 4).

Furthermore, ἀναβαίη is the natural expression for egress from the "lower" end of the hall. Those who would place the orsothyre towards the front of the megaron misinterpret the reference of τήν (vs. 129; see below).

(2) ἀκρότατον δὲ παρ' οὐδός (vs. 127), "along past the highest part of the threshold." Many think this refers to the orsothyre, but it does not seem natural to describe the sill of a small rear door as "the threshold of the well-established hall." Others understand οὐδός as the foundation of the front wall of the megaron. There is no evidence in Homer for this meaning of the word. It seems to be rather the threshold of the main entrance. If so, it follows that (3) the δδός (vs. 128) is not through the orsothyre, as many have understood it to be, but in the prodomos (Fig. 7), and that the poet's thought has passed from the rear to the front of the hall at the beginning of vs. 128. The "way" by which one approached the "laure" was at the same level as the upper surface of the great door-stone: it, therefore, ran by the sill of ash, which may be regarded as the highest part of the threshold taken as a whole.

(4) τήν, κτλ. (vs. 129 f.). This is the stumbling-block of all who place the orsothyre at the front of the hall. They think this was the doorway which Odysseus told the swineherd to guard. But as the orsothyre, on other grounds, must be placed in the rear of the megaron, such an interpretation is impossible. Nor can the pronoun refer to λαύρη, for, among other reasons, Eumæus stands, or is to stand, near it (vs. 130), and we shall see that he was also near Odysseus (vs. 163), who in turn was on the door-stone. Odysseus cannot mean that Eumæus is merely to keep an eye on laure or orsothyre to see if anyone attempts a flank attack, for in that case the words, "standing near it," would have no force. Τήν must, therefore, refer to the δδός, which runs along the wall (Fig. 7) from the great door-stone on which Odysseus and Eumæus are standing. The swineherd has only to place himself a little to the rear of Odysseus—if he is not already standing there—and he can not only guard against an attack from the direction of the laure, but also be in a position to aid Odysseus if the Suitors should try to force the main doorway. It follows that (5) μία δ' οἷη γίγνεται ἐφορμή (vs. 130) cannot mean that there was only one approach to the orsothyre from within the megaron, but that an enemy leaving the hall by the small door in the rear and reaching the laure, could not make a flank attack on one who was guarding the doorway at the end of the δδός (vs. 128 and

Fig. 7). In other words, the only exit from the laire for one coming from the direction of the orsothyre, was into the prodomos, and not, as in the traditional plan (cf. Figs. 4 and 5), into the courtyard. Hence (6) *στόμα λαύρης* (vs. 137) refers to the *σανίδες εὖ ἀραρυῖαι* of vs. 128.

(7) *αὐλῆς καλὰ θύρετρα* (vs. 137). This "fair portal" has been variously identified as the door at the end of the laire, where the latter debouches into the courtyard; the outer gate of the courtyard;¹ the door between prodomos and aithousa,² and the doorway where Odysseus is standing.³ The last seems by far the most likely. Melanthius says in effect, that it is just as hard to send a messenger out by the orsothyre as it would be to force the main doorway, for the only exit *via* the orsothyre can be blocked easily by one man, and this exit is so near the main door of the hall that Odysseus could easily place one of his retainers there. It is true that the words might more naturally be applied to the outer gate, but against this can be urged with fairness that the *αὔλειαί πυλαί* of Soph. *Antigone*, 18, lead *into* the courtyard from the interior of the palace.⁴

(8) *ἀνέβαινε Μελάνθιος . . . ἐς θαλάμους Ὀδυσῆος ἀνὰ ῥῶγας μεγάροιο* (vss. 142-143). What were the *ῥῶγες*?⁵ The conclusive evidence offered by Professor Myres that *ἀνά* means "out from the rear of the hall" as well as "up," obviates the necessity of considering the suggestions that they were openings high up above the floor of the megaron, either in the clerestory, or between the rafters and the roof, or in the rear wall. The explanation offered by Protodikos, who equates the word with modern Greek *ροῦγες*, "short and narrow passageways,"⁶ satisfies the demands both of philology and of the situation.⁷

¹ See the note of Monro on the verse in question.

² So Professor Myres, who thinks that Melanthius feared the arrows of Odysseus for one who should try to cross the prodomos.

³ Ameis-Hentze on vs. 137.

⁴ If the words mean the outer gate, as Jebb in his note on the verse understands them, then there is a change of scene between the Prologos and the Parodos. This is unparalleled as well as unnecessary.

⁵ See Schenkl. *op. cit.*, for the ancient explanations, and Ameis-Hentze, *Anhang* on χ 143, for many modern conjectures.

⁶ *De Aedibus Homericis*, p. 58.

⁷ The folksong from the country near Cyzicus, cited by Jebb (*Introduction*, p. 185), is convincing. "A monster is chasing a princess:

*στοὺς δρόμους τὴν κυνήγαγε,
μὲς τὴν αὐλὴ τὴν διώχνη,*

Those who accept this interpretation agree in general that the ῥῶγες were reached from the orsothyre. But the question remains whether the passageways were the same as parts of the laure, or different, and, if different, in what direction they ran. Jebb thinks, to the rear of the palace; Dickins, from the farther end of the laure into the armory (Fig. 6, and *J.H.S.*, XXIII, pp. 332 f.). I think the word may well refer to a narrow and broken passageway leading from the orsothyre at the rear end of the hall to the laure (Fig. 7), and that this corridor, on which it is generally agreed that the storerooms opened, ran at right angles to the long axis of the megaron (Fig. 7). Since this explanation differs essentially from any that has been proposed, we must consider the evidence at some length.

The view which is almost invariably held, that the storerooms were situated towards the rear of the main part of the palace, is not supported by any passage in the *Odyssey*,¹ nor have we good reason for placing them in the second story,² or underground.³ On the other hand, since the treasury was ἔσχατος (φ 9), we may infer that the storerooms were arranged in a series. The poet mentions three, the treasury, the armory, and the ὑπόροφος θάλαμος (β 337) wherein Euryceleia had her office. This con-

καὶ μὲς ταῖς ῥόγαις ταῖς στεναῖς
τοῦ παλατιοῦ τὴν φθάνει:

'he hunts her to the streets, he pursues her into the court, and in the narrow passages of the palace he overtakes her.'

¹ The statement of Dörpfeld (*Tiryns*, p. 242), that according to Homer the θάλαμοι were in the farthest recess of the palace (ἐν μυχῷ δόμον, cf. also Dickins, *op. cit.*, p. 332) lacks all authority, yet we can see, perhaps, how it came to be made. Alcinous and Arete, as well as two other royal pairs in the *Odyssey*, slept μυχῷ δόμον. Odysseus and his bride occupied a nuptial θάλαμος. This was therefore μυχῷ δόμον. Ergo, the other thalamoi were likewise μυχῷ δόμον. Dickins' remark, *op. cit.* p. 332, on which he bases his location of the armory, that this chamber was μυχῷ δόμον, is due to a hasty reading of χ 180.

² Two passages have been relied on by those who hold this view. (1) χ 142-143, the verses discussed above. Here ἀνά need not mean "up." (2) φ 1-63. When Penelope decides upon the contest of the bow she goes upstairs to get the key to the treasury (vss. 5-7), and the poet does not say that she came down again before she reached this storeroom (vs. 8). We may answer that neither does he say that she descended in carrying the bow to the Suitors (vs. 58). Since the formula is the same in both verses (βῆ δ' ἵμεναι θαλαμόνδε, and βῆ δ' ἵμεναι μεγαρόνδε), we might argue in the same way that the great hall was in the second story!

³ κατὰ in the phrase ὑπόροφον θάλαμον κατεβήσεται (β 337, cf. ο 99) need not mean "down," but rather "in" from an outer door.

tained wine, oil, and perhaps flour, as well as gold, bronze, and raiment (β 338-340, 354), and so would naturally have been rather near the entrance to the hall. We may place the armory somewhere between this storeroom and the treasury. Now it is to be noticed that Melanthius went, not ἐς θάλαμον, but ἐς θαλάμους, that is, the winding passage led to the series of storerooms, and not to the armory alone, as Dickins thinks.¹ But if the corridor—on

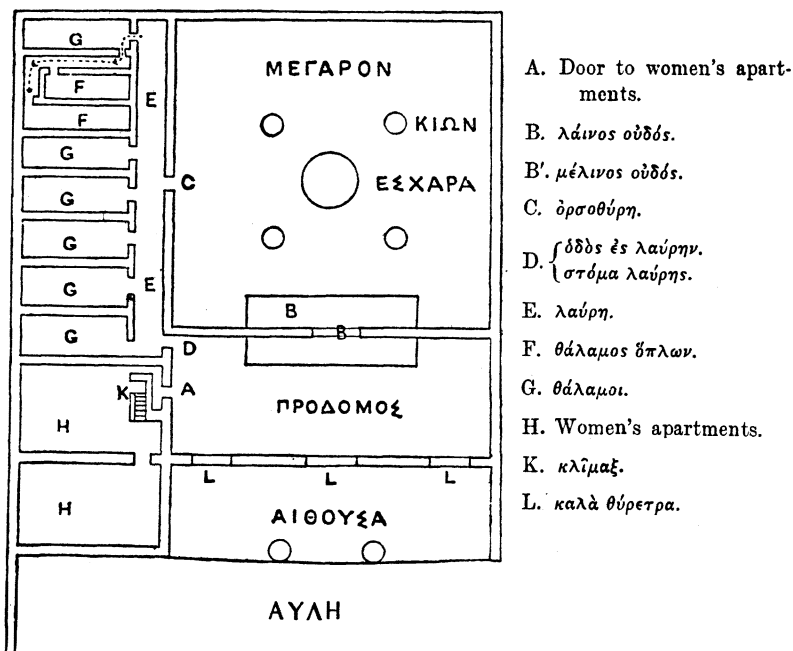


FIGURE 6.—THE PALACE OF ODYSSEUS: DICKINS.

which we may take it for granted that a series of storerooms would have opened—ran close to the side wall of the megaron, there

¹ See Fig. 6. It is true that for metrical reasons Homer sometimes uses the plural instead of the singular, but nowhere in *Iliad* or *Odyssey* is there a clear case of θάλαμοι = θάλαμος. Witte, *Singular und Plural*, p. 71, states that the singular of θάλαμος is used seventy times in the Homeric poems, and the plural for the singular only once, ψ 41, μυχῷ θαλάμων ἐνπήκτων. But here it is reasonable to suppose that the women had withdrawn in terror to the corner of one of several rooms,—the one that was farthest from the megaron (so Hayman). In the *Hymn to Demeter*, 143, the same phrase may be taken in a similar way as referring to the last of a series of chambers.

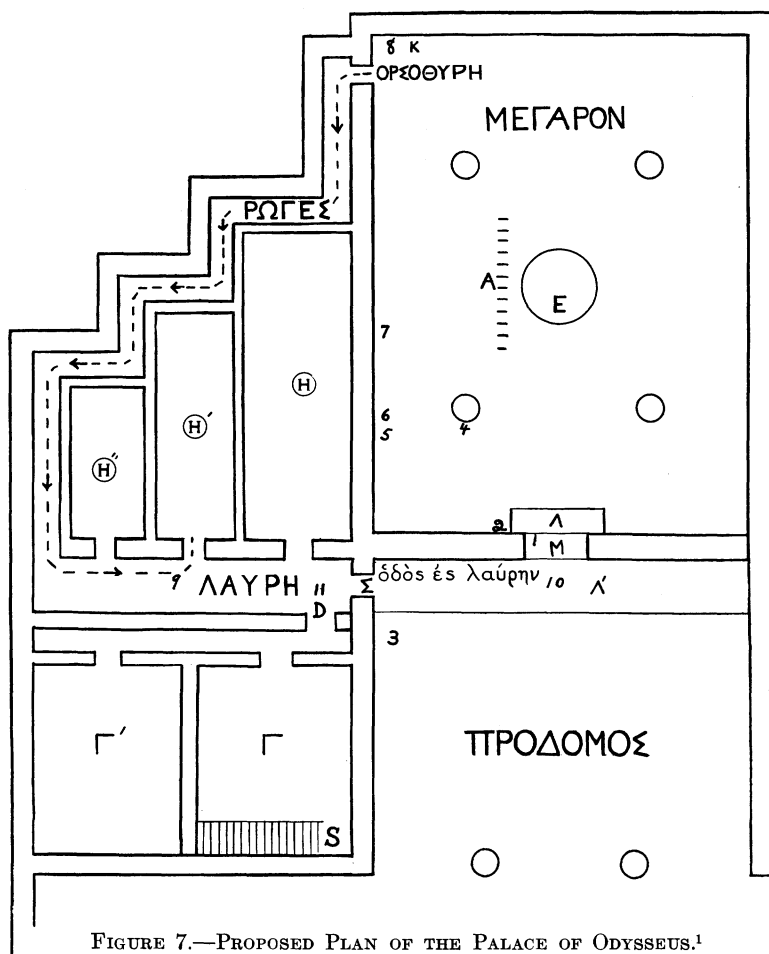
would have been no reason for using the ῥῶγες, and everything is against taking ῥῶγες and λαύρη as referring to the same passageway. I think, therefore, that we may regard the proposed arrangement of θάλαμοι, λαύρη, and ῥῶγες as entirely within the bounds of possibility. The last verses of the passage which we are discussing, show that it is also probable, and that it explains the action better than any other which has been suggested. At vs. 157 Odysseus bids Eumaeus go and shut the door of the armory, and see whether the traitor is one of the maids or Melanthius. As he was speaking (vs. 160), the goatherd went again for arms. Eumaeus caught sight of him, and said to Odysseus, *who was near him*, "There he goes." The poet does not say that Eumaeus had started for the armory when he saw the traitor. If he had already passed the στόμα λαύρης (Fig. 7, Σ)—as he must have done to look down a corridor running parallel to the long axis of the megaron—he would not have been near Odysseus when he spoke. Hence he must have been able to view the whole length of the laure from his position near Odysseus. The λαύρη, therefore, ran much as I have indicated it in Fig. 7.

The advantages of the arrangement of storerooms, corridor, and narrow passageway which I have suggested may be summed up as follows: The ῥῶγες are distinct from the λαύρη, and the use of the preposition ἀνά, the plural θαλάμους, and the phrase ἐγγὺς ἐόντα, are justified. This latter phrase, in fact, gives the key to the whole passage.

III.

If this interpretation of χ 126 ff. is accepted as probable, Dr. Leaf's location of the apartments of the women (Fig. 5, I) must be given up, for both the λαύρη and its στόμα must be placed differently. There remains the plan offered by Dickins (Fig. 6, H; see above, p. 293, note 1). This not only gives to the women the seclusion which is desirable, but if slightly modified (as in Fig. 7), has other advantages. If we suppose that there was a door opening on the corridor (Fig. 7, D) and giving access to the several rooms in which the women worked¹ from the queen's hyperoön above the thalamos which was nearest the prodomos and the courtyard (Fig. 7), Eurycleia can easily shut in the women before the slaughter (φ 387); she can likewise have ready access to her office in the ὑψόροφος θάλαμος (β 345f., Fig. 7, Θ). But above all, the nearness of the queen to the hall and its prodomos, which is

¹ Cf. the plan of the palace at Gha (Fig. 3, T, W.).

FIGURE 7.—PROPOSED PLAN OF THE PALACE OF ODYSSEUS.¹¹EXPLANATION OF PLAN.

Γ.Γ'. Women's Apartments.

S. Stairway leading to hyperoön.

D. Door to Women's Apartments closed by Eurycleia just before the slaughter (φ 387).

Θ. ὑπόροφος θάλαμος (β 337).

Θ'. θάλαμος ὀπλων (τ 17, χ 109, 140, κτλ.)

Θ''. θάλαμος ἔσχατος (φ 8f.).

A. The twelve axes (φ 76, 121f.).

Ε. ἐσχάρη.

Κ. The mixing-bowl (φ 145, χ 341).

Λ. λαῖνος οὐδός (ρ 30, υ 258, ψ 88).

Λ'. Stone platform level with the λαῖνος οὐδός, which is built into it; along this platform runs the οὐδός ἐς λαύρην (χ 128).

Μ. μέλινος οὐδός (ρ 339).

Ξ. στόμα λαύρης (χ 137).

The route of Melanthius from the megaron to the armory by way of orsothyre, rhogēs, and laure is indicated by a broken line. The arabic

essential in several passages, is obtained. From the thalamos below Penelope can hear Telemachus sneeze when he is in the hall (ο 541 f.) and while seated in front of her door (Fig. 7, 11) she can catch the words spoken there (υ 387-389). When she is in her upper chamber,¹ not only can she note the theme of the bard's lay (α 328), but also her sobbing easily seems above the head of Odysseus, as he lies awake in the prodomos (υ 92-94; Fig. 7, 3).

Finality is not claimed for the new plan here offered (Fig. 7) of the palace of Odysseus. It rests in part, as all plans must, on conjecture. It is offered as a contribution towards a clearer understanding of the action of the *Odyssey*, especially of the twenty-second book. All future discussions must take into consideration Professor Myres' discovery of the meaning of ἀνὰ δῶμα, etc.

numerals indicate the positions of leading characters as described in some of the passages discussed in this article: 1. Odysseus sitting on the ashen threshold (ρ 339); 2. Odysseus during the contest of the bow (υ 257ff., φ 420); 3. Odysseus when, lying awake, he hears Penelope sobbing (υ 1ff., 92ff.); 4. Telemachus; 5. Antinous; 6. Eurymachus; 7. Amphinomus (cf. σ 394-398 and χ 89-100); 8. Leiodes (φ 145f.); 9. Melanthius about to enter the armory for the last time (χ 165f.); 10. Eumaeus when he catches sight of Melanthius (χ 162f.); 11. Penelope when, seated κατ' ἀντηστίν (υ 387), she listens to the conversation in the megaron. But according to Jebb's interpretation of the phrase (*Introduction* [1887], p. 182, κατ' ἀντηστίν = over against the hall), which is attractive, Penelope would sit on the stone platform, Δ', about where we have placed the figure 10.

The stone platform (Δ'), of which the stone threshold forms a part is due to a suggestion of the Editor of the *JOURNAL*. The Editor also suggested that the mixing-bowl would more naturally stand in the centre, rather than at the side, of the rear of the megaron. This is true; but in that case the orsothyre would be in the middle of the rear wall, and since this would imply rhoges leading also to the right and affording a second means of egress from the rear of the hall, I have decided to place the mixing-bowl as in the original sketch.

That the subsidiary apartments are placed on the left, rather than on the right of the hall is due to the fact that the above arrangement of rhoges and laire was suggested to me by the passageways at the left of the megaron at Tiryns. The bath and other apartments may well have been situated at the right.

¹ There would naturally have been window-like openings on the courtyard to give light and air to the hyperoön, and through these openings sounds might move from and towards the megaron and prodomos more readily than by way of the staircase and passageways. I am indebted for this suggestion to Professor Paul Baur, of Yale University. Several other friends of the writer have also made helpful suggestions and criticisms, which the writer takes this opportunity of acknowledging.

It is hoped that due regard will also be paid to the new evidence, which the present writer has pointed out in this article, that the chief actors are found in the front part of the hall, and to the proofs that the difficult passage, χ 126-166, becomes intelligible only if we recognize (1) that the orsothyre was at the rear of the hall, (2) that Eumaeus was ordered to guard the ὀδός, and (3) that the phrase ἐγγὺς ἐόντα (vs. 166) is the cornerstone on which any satisfactory interpretation must rest.

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